

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 and 20-35 are pending. Claims 7-12, 16 and 17 are allowed. Claims 1, 9, 13, 16, 18, 21, 23-24, 29-30 and 32 have been amended. In view of the following, all pending claims are in condition for allowance. If, after considering this response, the Examiner does not agree that all of the claims are allowable, he is requested to schedule a teleconference with the Applicants' attorney to further the prosecution of the application.

Objection to claims 1, 9, 13, 24 and 30

Claims 1, 9, 13, 24 and 30 have been amended to correct informalities.

Rejection of claims 1-18 and 20-35 under §112, second paragraph

Claim 1

Claim 1 has been amended to overcome the "input signal" portion of this rejection.

Claim 1 recites providing a constant current responsive to the input signal. For example, transistors 52, 54, 82, 84, 86, 88, 90, 92, 94, 96 are described throughout the present application as constant-current transistors because each of these transistors provides a constant current while it is active (turned on). Because these currents charge and drain the capacitor 56 at a constant rate, the delay of the delay circuit can be accurately determined. As a result, the language recited in claim 1 is correct and not misdescriptive because transistors 52, 54, 82, 84, 86, 88, 90, 92, 94, 96 each provide a constant current in response to the input signal INPUT. In other words, in response to the input signal INPUT turning on a constant-current transistor, that constant-current transistor provides a constant current. Therefore, because claim 1 recites "responsive to the input signal", claim 1 is not indefinite.

Claims 7, 13, 16-18, 21, 23, 29 and 32

Claims 7, 13, 16-18, 21, 23, 29 and 32 are patentable for reasons similar to those recited above in support of the patentability of claim 1.

Rejection of claims 18, 20-22, 26-28, 32 and 34-35 under §102(b) as being anticipated by Huizer (US 5,477,182)

Claim 18

Claim 18, as amended, recites one or more current-mirror transistors each having an enable input, an input for receiving an input signal, and a constant-current output connected to the first plate of the fixed capacitor.

The Examiner concedes on page 4 of the office action that the cascode-connected circuit (combination of FETs N2 and P22) of Huizer was broadly interpreted to read on the “current element” of the old version of claim 18. However, claim 18 has been amended to recite single transistors each having an enable input, an input for receiving an input signal, and a constant-current output connected to the first plate of the fixed capacitor. The cascode-connected circuit (combination of FETs N2 and P22) of Huizer cannot be interpreted (broadly or otherwise) to read on a single transistor as recited in claim 18. Furthermore, the Examiner concedes that FET N2 is not a current-mirror transistor and does not have an enable input for receiving the enable signal V_{dd} , and the Examiner also concedes that FET P22 does not have an input for receiving the input signal i_b . Therefore, Huizer does not satisfy all of the limitations of claim 18.

Claim 21

Claim 21, as amended, recites a current circuit operable to source a first constant current to the energy-storage element through a first current element, sink a second constant current from the energy-storage element through a second current element, source a third constant current to the energy-storage element through a third current element, and sink a fourth constant current from the energy-storage element through a fourth current element.

The Examiner concedes on page 5 of the office action that the FET P22 of Huizer was broadly interpreted to source both the first and the third constant currents to the energy-storage element 86b at different times, and that the FET N2 was broadly interpreted to sink both the second and the fourth constant currents from the energy-storage element 86b at different times. However, claim 21 has been amended to clarify that each of the four constant currents pass through a separate and unique current element: the first constant current passes through a first current element, the second constant current passes through a second current element, the third constant current passes through a third current element, and the fourth constant current passes through a fourth current element. The FET P22 of Huizer cannot be interpreted (broadly or otherwise) to read on two separate and unique current elements as recited in claim 21. Similarly, the FET N2 of Huizer cannot be interpreted (broadly or otherwise) to read on two separate and unique current elements as recited in claim 21. Therefore, Huizer does not satisfy all of the limitations of claim 21.

Claim 32

Claim 32, as amended, is patentable for reasons similar to those recited above in support of the patentability of claim 21.

Claims 20, 22, 26-28 and 34-35

Claims 20, 22, 26-28 and 34-35 are patentable by virtue of their respective dependencies from claims 21 and 32.

Rejection of claims 1-6, 13-15, 23-24 and 29-31 under §103(a) as being unpatentable over any one of Elezi, Chen and Furutani in view of Huizer

Claims 1 and 13

Claims 1 and 13, as amended, are patentable for reasons similar to those recited above in support of the patentability of claim 18.

Claims 23 and 29

Claims 23 and 29, as amended, are patentable for reasons similar to those recited above in support of the patentability of claim 21.

Claims 5-6, 14-15, 24 and 30-31

Claims 5-6, 14-15, 24 and 30-31 are patentable by virtue of their respective dependencies from claims 1, 13, 23 and 29.

Allowable Subject Matter

Claims 7-12 and 16-17 are allowed.

CONCLUSION

In light of the foregoing, claims 1-18 and 20-35 are in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested.

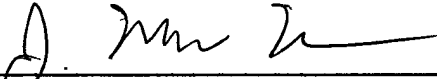
Applicants have enclosed with this response a petition for extension of time to respond along with a check for payment of the required fees. It is not believed that any other fees are due as a result of this amendment. However, should any additional fees be required, please charge them to Deposit Account No. 07-1897.

If, after considering this response, the Examiner does not agree that all of the claims are allowable, then it is respectfully requested that the Examiner contact the Applicants' attorney at (425) 455-5575.

Dated this 5th day of March, 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

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